

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
SUBJECT: REVIEW COUNCIL POLICY 000-40, LEGISLATIVE
ADVOCACY
STAFF PRESENTER: KATHY MILLISON, CITY MANAGER
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
AGENDA ACTION: INFORMATION ONLY

ISSUE

Council requested review of the Legislative Advocacy Policy 000-40, which was approved by resolution on April 9, 2013.

BACKGROUND

On January 2, 1996, the Council, by Resolution No. 22519, adopted Council Policy No. 000-40, Legislative Advocacy. The stated purpose of the policy was to provide direction to Council, boards, commissions and staff on the procedure for supporting and opposing State and Federal legislation.

In 2005, the Council adopted a broad set of principles and priorities to guide the Council's legislative positions on State and Federal legislation. The primary reason for the document was to allow staff to work with the Mayor in supporting or opposing legislation in a timely manner without going to Council for approval. Under these guidelines, focus was placed on legislation that impacted, preserved, improved or eroded 1) local fiscal resources and tools, or 2) municipal affairs/local authority. In addition, priority was placed on legislation that 1) had a major and significant financial or policy impact on the City, or 2) had an impact specific and unique to the City or the North Bay region.

On March 24, 2009, Council by motion adopted updated Legislative Principles and Priorities, which allowed staff and the Mayor greater flexibility in making decisions about legislative priorities.

On April 9, 2013, Council amended Council Policy 000-40 to (1) merge the Council Policy and Legislative Principles and Priorities into one document; (2) incorporate the Council's current priorities, goals and objectives as legislative priorities; and (3) reflect the Council's current procedure for responding to State and Federal legislation.

The updated Legislative Principles and Priorities required staff to bring forward for Council consideration and approval legislation that did not meet the following principles and priorities:

Support legislation that:

- Enhances local control of resources and infrastructure and tools that allow City Councils to address the needs of city residents within a framework of regional cooperation
- Encourages the use of State/Federal incentives for local government action rather than mandates
- Reforms local government finance structure in a way that establishes a stable revenue base for local government to plan for future growth and provide needed public facilities and services
- Closes the gap between tax revenue from development and the cost of providing services
- Promotes a stable transportation finance structure for State and local government and that balances and supports all modes of transportation and encourages alternative transportation and transit
- Recognizes that a sufficient supply of affordable workforce housing is essential to maintain and enhance livable communities
- Supports programs and legislation that assist local communities in funding housing initiatives and in developing creative housing programs
- Lowers the threshold for a voter-approved financing mechanism to a simple majority
- Guarantees local funding sources
- Provides ongoing funding for public safety programs, including gang prevention/intervention programs, emergency management programs and new public safety facilities and equipment
- Protects environmental resources
- Encourages support for construction and maintenance of recreation facilities
- Promotes and/or provides funding for programs that will assist cities in meeting their green house gas emission requirements and other climate protection initiatives
- Reforms the unfunded mandate reimbursement process
- Supports thriving and diverse neighborhoods
- Supports and protects opportunities for legislation and funding that enhance best practices for water supply, water distribution, wastewater collection, wastewater treatment, reuse, resource recovery and associated environmental initiatives

Oppose legislation that:

- Places new unfunded mandates and preemption of local regulatory or taxation authority
- Weakens local control and assigns additional authority to State or Federal agencies already overburdened with programs and facing significant resource reductions

ANALYSIS

Staff will continue to bring legislation directly to Council that does not meet the principles and priorities defined in the policy. In addition, the policy will allow staff to prepare letters of either support or opposition for the Mayor's signature in those cases where time does not allow the item to go before the full Council. In those instances, copies of the letter will be included in the following week's Council packet.

In addition, the City may take a position on legislation that is consistent with the League of California Cities. Those Federal legislative priorities are reviewed annually and will be given to Council as a written communication.

RECOMMENDATION

Information only. Council may provide direction to staff.

Author: Liz Licursi

Attachments:

- Council Policy 000-40

COUNCIL POLICY

| Subject: LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY | Policy Number | Effective Date | Number of Pages |
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A. BACKGROUND:

It is in the best interest of the City of Santa Rosa and its citizens to involve itself in legislative advocacy at the State and National level. The Council believes that an active program of legislative advocacy will produce better informed decisions and will protect the interest of the City.

B. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide principles to guide legislative positions for City staff. Focus will be placed on legislation that impacts, preserves, or erodes 1) local fiscal resources and tools; or 2) municipal affairs/local authority. In addition, priority will be placed on legislation that 1) has a major and significant financial or policy impact on the City; or 2) has an impact specific and unique to the City or North Bay region.

C. PROCEDURE:

1. The following process will be followed when responding to State or Federal legislation:
 - a. The proposed legislation, along with a draft letter for the Mayor's signature, will be placed on an upcoming City Council agenda for consideration by the full Council.
 - b. After Council concurrence, staff will send the letter to the appropriate State or Federal representatives.
 - c. Copies of all correspondence will be sent to the full Council.
2. On matters of urgency, when there is insufficient time for the above process:
 - a. If the proposed legislation is considered extremely beneficial or extremely detrimental to the City's interests, and after consultation between the Mayor and City Manager, a letter may be prepared immediately for the Mayor's signature, with copies provided to the full Council on the next agenda.
 - b. This procedure is particularly appropriate if the City's position is similar or identical to a past City position on this matter and/or is consistent with the position taken by the League of California Cities.
3. In addition:
 - a. The Mayor shall be advised of all meetings scheduled with State and Federal officials concerning policy matters.
 - b. The City Manager shall authorize all formal contacts with State and Federal elected officials originating from the City staff.
 - c. City employees appointed to the Board of Directors of a Policy Committee or elected as an officer of a department of the League of California Cities are permitted to vote or take a position on a State or Federal legislation on behalf of the League of California Cities. To the extent possible, employees will confer with the Mayor before taking a position on such legislation. Such action, however, does not necessarily indicate support of the legislation by the City Council.

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D. POLICY:

Support legislation that:

- Enhances local control of resources and infrastructure and tools that allow City Councils to address the needs of City residents within a framework of regional cooperation
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- Reforms local government finance structure in a way that establishes a stable revenue base for local government to plan for future growth and provide needed public facilities and services
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- Supports programs and legislation that assist local communities in funding housing initiatives and in developing creative housing programs
- Lowers the threshold for a voter-approved financing mechanism to a simple majority
- Protects local funding sources
- Provides ongoing funding for public safety programs, including gang prevention/ intervention programs, emergency management programs, and new facilities and equipment
- Protects environmental resources
- Encourages support for construction and maintenance of recreation facilities and cultural assets
- Promotes and/or provides funding for programs that will assist cities in meeting their greenhouse gas (GHG) emission requirements and other climate protection initiatives
- Reforms the unfunded mandate reimbursement process
- Supports thriving and diverse neighborhoods
- Supports and protects opportunities for legislations and funding that enhance best practices for water supply, water distribution, wastewater collection, wastewater treatment, reuse, resource recovery and associated environmental initiatives